

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

Over the last 20 years, the consolidation of media ownership has been staggering. The Telecommunications act of 1996 was supposed to increase competition and diversity and decrease costs to the public, but it has had the opposite effect. The media deluges the public everyday with more and more entertainment and advertising and less and less information. Even more importantly, diversity of perspective and opinion continues to be diminished. In my own community, cable charges have increased, and since the takeover by Gannett of our local newspaper, one can hardly find any news in the blizzard of advertising inserts and prepackaged corporate "feature stories." If anything, the rules governing these phenomena should be rolled back to the days when we had, for instance, equal time provisions and a fairness doctrine. The airwaves are public property and should not be made simply the private playground of rapaciously greedy corporations.